

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 15531 221706Z

47

ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

USDOCOSOUTH

SHAPEUSNR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 15531

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJ: ZACCAGNINI'S VIEWS ON CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: ZACCAGNINI IS OPTIMISTIC THAT BULK OF
ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM WILL GET
THROUGH PARLIAMENT THIS FALL. AT PRESENT UNIONS
APPEAR PREPARED TO GO ALONG. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE
PCI WILL PUSH HARD FOR CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT BEFORE NEXT
SPRING. ZACCAGNINI GIVING PRIORITY TO ACHIEVING
AND MAINTAINING UNITY WITHIN THE DC, AND THIS HE
DESCRIBED AS PRIMARY PURPOSE OF DC SEMINARS BEING
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PAGE 02 ROME 15531 221706Z

CONDUCTED THIS WEEK. HE DOES NOT ANTICIPATE ANY

MAJOR CHANGES AS RESULT OF NEXT DC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING. ZACCAGNINI BELIEVES IT POSSIBLE FOR CRAXI TO MOVE SOCIALISTS AWAY FROM PREFERENCE FOR COOPERATION WITH PCI, BUT RECOGNIZES IT A DIFFICULT JOB THAT WILL TAKE TIME. ZACCAGNINI GAVE NO HINT OF THINKING ABOUT RESIGNING. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR AND POLITICAL COUNSELOR CALLED ON ZACCAGNINI ON SEPTEMBER 21. LATTER LOOKED AND ACTED RESTED, RELAXED, AND IN GOOD HEALTH AFTER HIS BRIEF VACATION. AT NO POINT IN THE CONVERSATION DID ZACCAGNINI SAY ANYTHING THAT WOULD SUGGEST HE HAS ANY PRESENT INTENTION OF RESIGNING AS SECRETARY OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

3. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONVERSATION, I TOLD ZACCAGNINI OF MY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND OF HIS SYMPATHETIC CONCERN WITH THE EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS IN FRIULI. I ALSO REMINDED HIM OF THE GREAT CONTINUING INTEREST IN ITALIAN DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE USG AND AMONG INFORMED AMERICANS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO A COMMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT ANDREOTTI APPEARS TO HAVE GOTTEN OFF TO A GOOD START BY CONDUCTING HIS GOVERNMENT IN AN EFFICIENT AND BUSINESSLIKE MANNER, WHICH WE HOPE AUGURS WELL FOR ITS SUCCESS, ZACCAGNINI SAID THAT THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WILL BE DIFFICULT BUT THAT HE EXPECTED THAT ANDREOTTI WOULD BE ABLE TO GET THE BULK OF HIS PROGRAM THROUGH THE PARLIAMENT. DESPITE THE RECENT STATEMENTS BY BERLINGUER (ROME 15357) AND AMENDOLA (SEPTTEL) ZACCAGNINI DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL MOVE TO FORCE CHANGES IN THE GOVERNMENT UNTIL SOMETIME IN THE SPRING. WITH REGARD TO THE ANDREOTTI ECONOMIC PROGRAM, HE SAID THAT TO DATE THE UNIONS APPEAR TO BE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THAT PROGRAM AND THAT, AS LONG AS THE UNIONS WILL ACCEPT IT, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THE PCI TO MOUNT A MAJOR FRONTAL ATTACK.

5. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE,
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PAGE 03 ROME 15531 221706Z

SAID ZACCAGNINI, IS THAT THE DC BE FIRMLY UNITED IN THE SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS PROGRAM. ZACCAGNINI SAID THAT UNITY IS IN FACT THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE SEMINAR WHICH THE DC IS CONDUCTING THIS WEEK (ROME 15322). THE SEMINAR ALSO HAS THE SUBORDINATE PURPOSE OF GIVING EVERYONE (ESPECIALLY THE NEW SENATORS AND DEPUTIES) AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. IT IS HOPED THAT

THROUGH INTENSIVE EXAMINATION AND CRITICISM OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM BY THE ASSEMBLED DC PARLIAMENTARIANS AND PARTY OFFICIALS, THEY WILL COME OUT OF THE SEMINAR WITH A STRONGER SENSE OF UNITY.

6. COMMENTING ON INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE DC, ZACCAGNINI SAID THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY MAJOR CHANGE IN POLICY, DIRECTION, OR ORGANIZATION TO COME OUT OF THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING, OCTOBER 7-9. HE SAID THAT THE COUNCIL WOULD EXAMINE THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM, PROPOSALS FOR REFORM WITHIN THE PARTY, RELATIONS WITH THE PCI, PSI, AND THE OTHER LAY PARTIES. ON ALL OF THESE ISSUES, EXCEPT INTERNAL REFORM, HE EXPECTS A REAFFIRMATION OF THE PRESENT PARTY LINE. ON INTERNAL REFORM, HE SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT WILL BE POSSIBLE (WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC), BUT OBSERVED WITH DISCOURAGEMENT THAT OLD HABITS AND WAYS OF DOING THINGS ARE DIFFICULT TO CHANGE OVERNIGHT. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE SAID THAT THE PARTY IS ACTIVELY STUDYING HOW TO RELAUNCH A DC YOUTH MOVEMENT BUT IS NOT YET READY TO DO SO. HE CLEARLY WANTS TO AVOID A YOUTH MOVEMENT THAT IS SIMPLY A REFLECTION OF THE PARTY'S FACTIONS AND CURRENTS AND ALSO ONE THAT IS TOO MUCH IN THE HANDS OF CONSERVATIVE "YOUNG EXECUTIVES". AT THE SAME TIME HE IS ALSO NOT READY TO TURN THE YOUTH MOVEMENT OVER TO THE "COMMUNION AND LIBERATION" TYPES. THIS PROBLEM MAY ALSO BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT NATIONAL COUNCIL. IN COMMENTING ON SEVERAL RECENT PUBLIC CALLS BY PARTY LEADERS TO END FACTIONALISM WITHIN THE PARTY, HE COMMENTED THAT MOST ARE IN FAVOR OF ENDING FACTIONALISM IN THEORY BUT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO DO SO IN PRACTICE. HOWEVER, HE OBSERVED THAT THE CURRENTS HAVE BEEN DECLINING IN IMPORTANCE IN THE PAST

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PAGE 04 ROME 15531 221706Z

YEAR AND HE EXPECTS THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

7. AS HE HAS SAID IN HIS PUBLIC SPEECHES, ZACCAGNINI REAFFIRMED HIS VIEW THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SOCIALISTS MOVE TOWARD THE DC AND AWAY FROM THE PCI. HE IS OPTIMISTIC THAT CRAXI WILL ULTIMATELY BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZES THAT IT IS NO EASY TASK AND THAT IT WILL TAKE TIME. HE SAID THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DC AND THE PSI SHOWS SOME SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT BUT THAT, GIVEN THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THE PSI, THE DC MUST MOVE VERY CAUTIOUSLY SO AS NOT TO COMPLICATE CRAXI'S PROBLEMS. ZACCAGNINI VERY MUCH HOPES THAT THE USG WILL DO ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING IT CAN TO ENCOURAGE THE PSI TO MOVE BACK TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

AND SHOWED SOME ENTHUSIASM FOR VISITS OF PSI OFFICIALS
TO THE UNITED STATES.

8. AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION THE SUBJECT OF THE
DC'S BAD PRESS IN AMERICA CAME UP. ZACCAGNINI RESPONDED
VERY POSITIVELY TO MY SUGGESTION THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL
TO HAVE A FEW OF THE NEW AND YOUNGER DC MEMBERS OF
PARLIAMENT, WHO SPEAK FLUENT ENGLISH, GO TO THE UNITED
STATES AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DC AND FIND OPPORTUNITIES
TO MAKE VARIOUS PUBLIC APPEARANCES, INCLUDING
TELEVISION TALK SHOWS. GIVEN HIS VERY POSITIVE REACTION I TOLD HIM
THAT WE WOULD ATTEMPT TO BE HELPFUL
IN ARRANGING SUCH APPEARANCES IF INDEED THE DC WISHED
TO SEND SUCH PEOPLE TO THE US. COMMENT: I FEEL
REASONABLY SURE FROM HIS REACTION THAT WE WILL BE HEARING
FROM THE DC ON THIS POSSIBILITY. IF THEY PICK THE
RIGHT PEOPLE, IT COULD BE HELPFUL TO THE D.VOLPE

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